

A METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to the field of competitive games which can be played in the home or educational environment, and more specifically, to guessing games involving reasoning, logic and other thinking skills to identify a specified answer which is associated with a shaped figure.

[0002] There are many types of well-known competitive games that are played for entertainment purposes. "Charades" and games of a similar type are well known and are played having a person act out certain predetermined well-known objects, people, places, things, quotes and phrases.

[0003] A variation of "Charades" exist in which pictures are drawn to give hints to predetermined answers which are well-known words, phrases, etc., such as "Pictionary." Additionally, further games exist wherein players try to guess words, phrases, etc., after receiving a clue. Additional clues may aid the guessing of the phrase; however, each new clue limits the amount of points a team may be rewarded after they guess the phrase.

[0004] Many toys are limited to either entertainment purposes or may be limited to educational purposes. Additionally, games and toys that provide both educational and entertainment purposes are sometimes limited in that they may either be directed towards physical activity, communicative activity or reasoning but rarely all three.

[0005] Another problem associated with prior art games is the requirement of a sufficient amount of space to act out predetermined quotes and the like. Furthermore, games such as "Pictionary" offer an unfair advantage to a player with artistic talent.

[0006] Therefore, what is needed in the marketplace is an additional toy that not only draws the attention of its players by supplying hours of entertainment but also provides

ease of playing as well as educational features such as physical therapy, communicative therapy and further stimulates logic and reasoning of the players while also offering a fair and balanced format in which players of all skill level may participate.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The present invention satisfies all the above mentioned needs by providing at least one flexible wire capable of being folded and shaped so as to represent a figure. In playing the present game a person folds and shapes the flexible wire in order to represent an object or a clue of an object so that others may try and guess the object represented by the flexible wire.

[0008] The game may further include a set of cards each having a picture or text disposed on the face of the cards. The player folding the flexible wire tries to shape the wire to represent the object on the card or a clue to the object on the card while other players try to guess what is represented by this wire.

[0009] More than one wire may be employed for this purpose. Additionally the wires may be sized and shaped differently.

[0010] The cards may be divided into various categories, such as: food, places, things and hobbies. Additionally the categories may also be divided along the lines of levels of difficulty.

[0011] The present invention may further include a timer, limiting the amount of time a person has to guess the object represented by the flexible wire as well as a point system. The point system awards various points when a person guesses the object represented by the flexible wire correctly. Points may be rewarded depending on the level of difficulty of the object guessed correctly or if a team guesses a certain number of objects correctly in a row.

[0012] The point system may further work in conjunction with a game board wherein as a team guesses an object correctly they move across a path located on the game board.

The number of spaces they move along the path may be determined by either a numbered spin, dice or various other point systems.

[0013] The difficulty level of the present invention maybe further enhanced by limiting the body language that the person folding the flexible wire can express. The body language may be limited so that the person may only move in conjunction with the object represented by the flexible wire or alternatively all body language may be limited except as needed to bend and fold the flexible wire.

[0014] The point system may be further defined wherein one point or a certain amount of points are awarded for a single word, additional points are awarded for compound words or two word answers, as well as additional points for a super bonus card.

[0015] The present invention may be also adapted for use for educational and therapeutic purposes. Thus the present invention may serve to improve fine motor skills as well as cognitive skills of children as well as the disabled. In such an environment, the instructor may fold the flexible wire while others try to guess what object is represented by the flexible wire. Alternatively, players may fold and shape the wire so as to try and represent the object that is requested.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a user beginning the game by folding and shaping a flexible wire;

[0017] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a user having completed folding and shaping a flexible wire into a desired shape;

[0018] FIG. 3 is a front view of alternate embodiments of flexible wires which may be included with the presenting invention;

[0019] FIGS. 4 and 5 are samples of a plurality of cards which may be included with the present invention; and

[0020] FIG. 6 shows additional elements, a board, a timer and a spinner which may be included with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] The present invention consists of a game played for entertainment purposes in a home or similar environment. Additionally, the present invention may be used for educational purposes in a school or hospital setting. The game may be played with a minimum of two players, but is capable of being played by many more players. In the preferred embodiment, the present invention contemplates having at least two opposing teams competing against one another with each team consisting of at least two players. More preferably, each team consists of more than two players. The game may also be played in multiple rounds.

[0020] With reference to FIG. 1, the elements necessary to play the game consist of the players and at least one flexible wire 10. A player from a first team decides on an object, place, thing, phrase or the like, which he will try to have the other players guess. In order to help the other players guess, the player, designated the constructor, may use at least one flexible wire 10. After deciding on what word, phrase or clause the constructor wants to represent, the constructor then proceeds to bend, fold and shape flexible wire 10, either into a representation of the word he decided on or into clues which will aid the guessing players in trying to determine the word he has chosen. An example of this is shown in FIG. 2 where a constructor has bent and folded the flexible wire 10 into a balloon.

[0021] The present invention contemplates reducing, if not totally eliminating any body language by the constructor that would aid the guessing players unless it is used in conjunction with flexible wire 10 to express movement of the object that the constructor is trying to shape. In alternate embodiments, the game may be played without eliminating or reducing all nonessential body movement.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 3, a plurality of flexible wires 14 having varying shapes and sizes may be included with the game. In this embodiment, the constructor has the benefit of the use of the plurality of flexible wires 14 in order to try to represent the object he desires. This feature allows the constructor to represent more complicated structures due to the constructor's ability to combine wires. The plurality of flexible wires 14 may differ in color from one another. This may result in structures which have components that may now be more easily differentiated by the guessing players.

[0023] As shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, in a preferred embodiment, the present invention may include a plurality of cards 12. The cards 12 may have either text or pictures of various objects, events or the like represented on a surface 13 of the card 12. Thus, when the constructor wishes to obtain an object which he intends to represent by flexible wire 10, he first chooses a card from the plurality of cards 12. As shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, text such as the word "balloon" may be represented or a picture of a balloon may be included on surface 13 of card 12. The present invention also contemplates the cards 12 being divided into various categories such as but not limited to (1) food; (2) places and things; (3) living things; and (4) hobbies. In an alternate embodiment, cards 12 may be divided into various skill levels such as easy, average and difficult, wherein more points may be awarded depending on the level of difficulty of card 12 chosen.

[0024] Referring to FIG. 6, the present invention may include timer 20, board 22 and spinner 24. Timer 20 may be used to limit the amount of time the guessing players have to guess which object the constructor is trying to represent by flexible wire 10.

[0025] Board 22 may include a path arranged along the board and it may be divided into a plurality of spaces 23. A team may begin on the start square 26 and must travel to

finish square 28 in order to win the game. One option of the game may be after a team is able to guess the correct object represented by flexible wire 10, the team spins spinner 24 in order to see how many spaces 23 they may proceed forward.

[0026] In additional embodiments, the players may roll dice in order to see how many spaces they may move forward along the path.

[0027] In still a further embodiment, a point system may be employed. As previously mentioned, the point system may be divided into easy, average and difficult categories or points may be awarded to a team depending on the number of words represented on a card. For example, one point may be awarded for a single word, two points for a compound word, three points for a two word answer and five points for a super bonus card.

[0028] An example of a round and the progress in the game is the following: The game includes at least two opposing teams, with each team including at least two players. After deciding which team goes first, the constructor of the first team chooses a card from the plurality of cards 12. The constructor then shows card 12 to the opposing team in order that they may be sure that the constructor does not use excessive body motion which may give clues to the object represented on card 12. The opposing team then starts timer 20 while the constructor begins folding and shaping flexible wire 10. The constructor may shape flexible wire 10 to specifically represent the object on card 12 or the constructor may shape flexible wire 10 to represent other words and objects which represents clues to the players on his team as to the object represented on card 12. If the first team is successful in guessing the object on card 12, they are awarded points using any method described or additional scoring methods.

[0029] If the team guesses the object on card 12, the present game may be played where they continue to choose from the plurality of cards 12 and continue their turn. Thus,

their turn may last until they are unable to guess an object on a card 12. In an alternate embodiment, regardless of whether the first team guesses the correct object represented on card 12 or not, they will have completed their part of the round.

[0030] After the first team has completed their turn, a constructor is chosen from the opposing team and subsequently follows the same steps previously detailed.

[0031] Upon completion of the round, a winning team may be decided by the number of correct guesses a team received with regards to guessing the correct representation on a card 12. Additionally, the game may continue having multiple rounds wherein either the same constructor from each team is chosen or a constructor from a team is changed after each round. Once again, a winner may be decided with regard to how many correct answers a team can achieve or which team is able to move from the start square 26 on board 22 to the finish square 28 first.

[0032] In an alternate embodiment of the present invention, a constructor may fold and shape a flexible wire while two opposing teams try to guess the object represented by the flexible wire. Points may be awarded to the team that is first able to guess the object represented by the flexible wire.

[0033] Although the present invention has been described with reference to a home game having a winner and a loser for entertainment purposes, the game may also be utilized as an educational or therapeutic tool. Specifically, those who suffer from cognitive, linguistic or physical disabilities may find joy and satisfaction in playing the present game while also receiving therapy directed toward their disability.

[0034] By entertainingly encouraging a person to use his or her motor skills in order to bend and fold flexible wire 10, without even being aware, that person is strengthening and improving as well as refining their fine

motor skills. Additionally, the executive functioning of cognitive skills is being utilized by each and every game player. Specifically, the constructor must formulate a plan to bend flexible wire 10 so as to elicit the correct word or phrase. Next, the constructor must implement the plan by logically bending and folding various segments of flexible wire 10 in order to accomplish his goal. Symbolic representation of an object, whether one is the constructor or the guessing players, flexes and hones the "mental muscle" as much as it flexes and hones fine motor skills and muscle tone.

[0035] Also, the guessing player benefits in that he is utilizing logic and reasoning power so as to think "out of the box" and decode the constructor's intentions. In addition to the cognitive and physical problem solving skills involved, this game addresses social skills, turn-taking, and impulsivity as it can be played in a group. It also addresses transitioning skills as players rotate between guessors and constructors.

[0036] Since the game may be played at varying levels, those with minor disabilities, as well as those with more severe disabilities, may benefit from participation in the game.

[0037] With regard to educational purposes, children may also benefit from the present game either by playing the game amongst themselves, by playing the game with a teacher or by just playing the game with their parents. Children, even at a very young age, may receive benefits by having cards with simple representations such as squares, circles, numbers, letters and the like.

[0038] Although the invention herein has been described with reference to particular embodiments, it is to be understood that these embodiments are merely illustrative of the principles and applications of the present invention. It is therefore to be understood that numerous modifications may be made to the illustrative embodiments and that other

arrangements may be devised without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.